



**FAIRFAX COUNTY  
FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT**  
4100 Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030  
(703) 246-2126



**Edward L. Stinnette**  
Fire Chief

**DATE:** June 19, 2000 00-02

**TO:** All Architects, Builders, Developers, Engineers, Surveyors and  
Contractors Practicing in Fairfax County

**FROM:** Chief Edward L. Sinnette  
Fire and Rescue Department

**SUBJECT:** Fire Protection Systems: Third Party Pre-Review Policy for Fire  
Sprinkler, Clean Agent and/or Fire Alarm Shop Drawings

**REFERENCE:** Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code 1996, Section 113.2.1,  
*Approved Inspection Agencies*

In response to industry requests, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, in concert with the Fairfax County Office of Building Code Services, is implementing a one-year pilot program whereby pre-approved qualified individuals would be permitted to provide third party pre-review of shop drawings of fire sprinkler, clean agent and/or fire alarm systems. The program is subject to certain guidelines and restrictions. The program would:

1. Be limited to Registered Design Professionals and their qualified assistants.
2. Require attendance at an initial seminar and annual seminars thereafter.
3. Be effective July 1, 2000 with a mid-year evaluation for any required modifications by December 31, 2000 and a final evaluation by June 30, 2001, to continue or terminate the program.

The policy is attached to this letter and comments are invited now and during the pilot program period. Please address those comments to the attention of:

David Thomas, P.E.  
Fire Prevention Division  
4100 Chain Bridge Road, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030-7001

Mr. Thomas can be reached Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 703-246-4819,

by fax at 703-691-1053, or e-mail david.thomas@co.fairfax.va.us.

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Fire and Rescue Department staff will conduct initial training sessions for all interested parties. Attendance at one of these meetings by registered design professionals is a prerequisite for participation in the program. The meetings will be held on July 13 and on August 17, 2000, from 9 to 11 a.m. in the Herrity Building, Room 106, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia.

Attachment

cc: Assistant Chief Mark S. Wheatley, Fire and Rescue Department  
Deputy Chief Clark O. Martin, Jr., Fire Prevention Division  
Battalion Chief John S. White, Fire Prevention Services Division  
David Thomas, Engineer III, Fire Prevention Division  
John Wesley White, Director, Public Works and Environmental Services  
Zofia A. Zager, Director, Office of Building Code Services  
Audrey Clark, Director, Building Plan Review Division, OBSC  
Central Files

**June 15, 2000**

### **Third Party Pre-Review Policy for Fire Sprinkler, Clean Agent and/or Fire Alarm Shop Drawings**

**Reference:** Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC), Section 113.2.1, *Approved Inspection Agencies*, whereby the Code Official is able to accept reports emanating from approved inspection agencies.

#### **Purpose**

Whereas reviews of fire sprinkler, clean agent, and fire alarm shop drawings are necessary pre-requisites to proper inspections of fire protection systems, as set forth in the VUSBC, Chapter 9, *Fire Protection Systems*, the policy set forth below is implemented to facilitate their review by providing an alternative to waiting for County review of same.

#### **Definitions**

- (1) **VUSBC** shall mean the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.
- (2) **Code Official** shall mean the Building Official or authorized technical assistant. For the purpose of this policy, technical assistant shall be the Fire Marshal of Fairfax County or his assistants.
- (3) **Shop drawings** shall mean drawings describing, in detail, and including engineering calculations where necessary, fire sprinkler, clean agent, and fire alarm systems as set forth in the VUSBC, Chapter 9, *Fire Protection Systems*, and attendant reference standards, including, where relevant, Fairfax County implementation memoranda and the Fairfax County Public Facilities Manual.
- (4) **Third party pre-reviewer** shall mean a Registered Design Professional practicing in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the discipline of fire protection engineering who meets the criteria below and is approved by the Code Official to carry out pre-review(s) of fire sprinkler, clean agent, and/or fire alarm shop drawings.
- (5) **Qualified Assistant** shall mean a professional technician working under the responsible charge and direction of a Registered Design Professional.

#### **Qualifications for Participation under the Third Party Pre-Review Policy for Fire Sprinkler, Clean Agent and Fire Alarm Shop Drawings**

- (1) An individual and his qualified assistants who meets the qualifications set forth below and are approved by the Code Official, shall be eligible to pre-review and recommend for submission to the Code Official shop drawings for sprinkler, clean agent, and fire

alarm systems.

- (a) An individual pre-reviewer must possess valid licensure as a Registered Design Professional practicing in the discipline of fire protection in the Commonwealth of Virginia pursuant to the *Code of Virginia*, 54.1-400 *et seq.*
  - (b) Qualified assistants shall possess educational qualifications of NICET Level II or above, with specialization in fire sprinkler, special hazard, or fire detection, as verified by the Code Official.
- (2) An individual pre-reviewer must provide verification of their attendance at an initial seminar presented periodically by the County for applicants under the Third Party Pre-Review Policy for Fire Sprinkler, Clean Agent, and Fire Alarm Shop Drawings.
  - (3) An individual who has prepared design plans for any shop drawing or building component shall not serve as a pre-reviewer for such drawing or component. Attention is called to the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act of the Commonwealth, VA Code 2.1-639 *et seq.* This restriction shall apply to all members of the individual's firm.
  - (4) When approving an individual as a pre-reviewer for shop drawings, the Code Official shall specify the types of plans and components which the individual is authorized to pre-review and recommend for submission pursuant to this policy, and will assign a Pre-Reviewer Number to such individual.
  - (5) An individual who has been approved as a pre-reviewer shall pre-review only those types of shop drawings which are specified under (4) above in the designation and which the pre-reviewer is authorized to design under the *Code of Virginia*, Title 54.1, Chapter 4.

**Criteria for maintaining pre-reviewer status; revocation of approval; reinstatement.**

- (1) In order to maintain approved status as a pre-reviewer, an individual must continue to meet the qualifications specified above and recommend for submission shop drawings that consistently meet the requirements of the VUSBC and attendant standards, and the County Code.
- (2) A pre-reviewer shall successfully complete an annual update session as specified by the Code Official.
- (3) A pre-reviewer shall provide annual verification in writing to the Code Official of licensure in the area in which they are approved.
- (4) Pre-reviewer approved status may be revoked by the Code Official for failure to comply with this policy. Such revocation shall be in writing and shall reference the provision(s) of this policy with which the pre-reviewer has not complied.

- (5) Pre-reviewer approved status may be re-instated by the Code Official upon the determination that the basis for revocation under (4) above has been remedied to the satisfaction of the Code Official and that the individual currently meets the qualifications of this policy.

### **Procedure for Submission for Review**

- (1) Before a property owner or authorized agent may submit fire sprinkler, clean agent or fire alarm shop drawings to the Code Official for review and approval under this Third Party Pre-Review Policy for Fire Sprinkler, Clean Agent, and/or Fire Alarm Shop Drawings, said shop drawings shall have first been pre-reviewed and recommended for submission by a County-approved pre-reviewer(s), as required by this policy. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner or authorized agent to obtain such pre-review and recommendation.
- (2) Shop drawings submitted pursuant to this policy may be subject to periodic detailed review by the Code Official.
- (3) The Code Official shall maintain a tracking system to monitor the recommendations of the individual County-approved pre-reviewers and the consistency with which shop drawings recommended by them conform to the applicable provisions of the VUSBC, County Code, and attendant standards.
- (4) The Pre-Reviewer Number signifying the Code Official's approval as a pre-reviewer, the pre-reviewer's signature and Engineer's License Number shall be included with the statement set forth in subsection (5) below; and all shall be incorporated into all shop drawings and plans submitted to the Code Official pursuant to this policy.
- (5) All components of the shop drawing submittal must be pre-reviewed and recommended for submission by an approved pre-reviewer. Shop drawing plans, including engineering calculations as necessary, accepted by the Code Official for review under the Third Party Pre-Review Policy for Fire Sprinkler, Clean Agent, and/or Fire Alarm Shop Drawings must contain a signed statement or statements from the County-approved pre-reviewer(s) recommending submission of the plans for review. Such statement(s) shall be dated and signed, and shall read as follows:

By signing this document I certify that I have pre-reviewed all components of the enclosed shop drawing plan(s), identified by project name, street address, names of individual(s) preparing the plan(s), and type of plan, and have found all components of the plan to be in conformance with the applicable provisions of the \_\_\_\_\_ (year) VUSBC and *Code of the County of Fairfax*, and attendant standards, to the best of my

professional knowledge and belief. I recommend the aforementioned plan(s) for submission under the Third Party Pre-Review Policy for Fire Sprinkler, Clean Agent, and/or Fire Alarm Shop Drawings. I further certify that I am a County-approved pre-reviewer and that I am authorized to pre-review and recommend for submission the shop drawing(s) and components specified in the preceding sentence.

### **Responsibilities and Obligations**

Nothing contained in this policy shall be construed as relieving individuals who prepare and submit plans of the responsibilities and obligations which they would otherwise have with regard to the preparation of plans, nor shall it relieve the County of its obligations to review all plans in the manner prescribed by law.

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services  
Office of Building Code Services  
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